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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

MAURY ISLAND NATURAL AREA REMEDIATION (SOIL CLEANUP)

What is known about contamination at Maury Island Site? What testing has been done to date?

Since the late 1990's several different studies related to metals impacts have been conducted as a result of the Tacoma Smelter Plume fallout. The previous site owner conducted soil testing in areas slated for future mining and along roadways. Prior to purchasing the property and shortly after acquisition, County consultants conducted additional soil testing for contaminants associated with the smelter plume and a former skeet range location that had been identified. The data collected from these various studies indicates that elevated levels of arsenic and lead exist in near-surface soils throughout the property, except for recently mined areas.

Is it safe to recreate there?

The site is open to the public for non-motorized recreational trail use. The main risk from contaminated soils comes from eating them, not from touching them. At the arsenic and lead levels found on this site, there is no immediate health risk, but it may be a long-term concern. Over a long period of time, regular exposure to arsenic and lead can contribute to health problems. Young children are most at risk because they play on the ground and put dirty hands and toys in their mouths.

You can take these simple steps to greatly reduce your exposure to any contamination that might be in the site's soils:

- Watch young children to make sure they aren't eating dirt
- Stay on the trails
- Thoroughly wash any plants or berries before eating
- After visiting the site:
 - wash your hands and face before eating
 - clean any toys brought to the site with soap and water
 - wipe or remove shoes before entering your home
 - wash soil laden clothes separately

Should I worry about walking my dog at the park?

Dogs and other animals are less sensitive to arsenic than humans. We recommend wiping off dirty paws and brushing off dirt so they don't bring contamination into your home. Pets must be leashed per King County Park Rules (*King County Code, Title 7*).

What is King County's responsibility for addressing soil remediation (cleanup)?

In February 2011, the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) identified King County as a "potentially liable person" (PLP). Under the States' Model Toxics Control Act, a PLP is liable for site cleanup. King County and Ecology negotiated an Agreed Order (Order) to guide further site assessment and move toward a final cleanup plan. That Order was signed by both parties and went into effect on January 31, 2013.

What is included in an Agreed Order (Order) and what does it require?

The Agreed Order is a legally binding administrative order that outlines actions King County must undertake to avoid potential enforcement action by Ecology. It does not identify specific cleanup actions at this time, but rather includes a scope of work, required deliverables and schedule for implementation of the required Order elements which are:

- a remedial investigation report (defines the extent of contamination),
- a feasibility study (develops and evaluates clean up options) and
- a cleanup action plan (explains which cleanup alternatives will be used).

What is the relationship between the site management planning and the soil cleanup processes?

The feasibility study, which examines possible cleanup options, cannot be developed until King County finalizes its Site Management Plan to identify proposed site uses, alterations and development.

Will additional testing be required? How will it be determined that sufficient testing has been completed?

Yes, based upon results from previous investigations there are areas that will need further testing to better define the extent of contamination. It is important to understand the full extent of contamination because applicable remediation technologies and cost estimates in the feasibility study will be based upon this data.

What are some of the potential actions for cleanup that are available to cleanup at Maury Island Natural Area?

Specific strategies and technologies for cleanup of the site have not been identified. But common methods that have been used for other cleanups include one or more of the following: capping, removing soil off site, storing soils on site, as well as institutional controls such as fencing, signage, etc. It not certain at this time which, or if any of these technologies will be employed.

When will cleanup efforts begin?

The timing of clean up cannot be specifically identified at this time as it is a complex, multiple step process. In addition, full information about both the level of contamination and plans for park development are not yet known. Therefore, it is unlikely that actual cleanup actions will not begin until 2014 at the earliest.

How will cleanup costs be paid?

Several different state and federal grant programs are available to help cover the costs of the cleanup. Although King County was not awarded funds in 2012 through the EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Pilot Grant Program, we recently submitted an Oversight Remedial Action grant application to Ecology and are awaiting notification regarding funding award and availability.

Why is Ecology requiring cleanup of the Maury Island Site, but not other public open space sites in the same vicinity?

Ecology has expanded the Soil Safety Program to include remediation of soils within parks, day camps and multifamily play areas; remediation of contaminated soils at King County's Dockton Park occurred last fall. Maury Island Natural Area is receiving more stringent oversight because Ecology had previously initiated cleanup discussions with the former owner of the land and helped fund acquisition of the site (through ASARCO settlement funds). In addition, the site has multiple sources of contamination—Tacoma Smelter Plume, the skeet range and former mining activities. Ecology has determined that it is appropriate to require cleanup at the Natural Area and it may serve as a model for cleanup efforts on other open space sites.

What if I have additional questions about the soil cleanup at Maury Island Natural Area or want to be added to a list for future updates and meeting notifications?

For specific questions about the soil remediation process on Maury Island Site, please contact Ron Timm, DOE Site Manager, at rtim461@ecy.wa.gov or by phone at: 425-649-7185.

To receive updates about site cleanup, including notification public meetings and public review/comment periods, please contact Meg Bommarito, Public Involvement Coordinator, at mbom461@ecy.wa.gov or by phone at: 425-649-7256

Information about cleanup efforts at Maury Island Natural Area is available at: <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=1532>

For more general information about the Tacoma Smelter Plume, see Ecology's web site at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/toxics/tacoma-smelter.html> or contact Hannah Aoyagi, Education and Outreach at hannah.aoyagi@ecy.wa.gov or by phone at: (360) 407-6790